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ROBERT REDFORD ON HORSES, HEALING AND THE BOOK *RIDING HOME* BY TIM HAYES

By Tim Hayes

Robert Redford has written a compelling Foreword to my new book, *Riding Home ~ the Power of Horses to Heal*. I am honored and profoundly grateful. In doing so he has lent his invaluable support to the thousands of emotionally wounded men, women and children in desperate need of healing yet unaware of its existence, availability and effectiveness found in today's Equine Therapy programs.

For over two decades I have been teaching the principals of Natural Horsemanship (or what was once referred to as "Horse Whispering") helping humans create better relationships with their horses. During this time I became fascinated with the ability of horses to actually facilitate in the healing of a wide variety of human emotional wounds.

Riding Home scientifically and experientially explains why horses have the extraordinary ability to emotionally transform

the lives of thousands of men, women and children whether they are horse lovers, or those suffering from deep psychological wounds.

My goal is to inform those who know nothing about equine therapy of the effectiveness of its healing and to raise public and government support for it as a method of recovery that has remarkably succeeded where traditional talk therapy and prescription medications



Robert Redford.

have failed.

Everyone knows someone who needs help: a husband, a wife, a partner, a child, a friend, a troubled teenager, a war veteran with PTSD, someone with autism, an addiction, basically anyone in emotional pain or who has lost their way. For all those who are suffering, *Riding Home* provides compelling examples of how "Equine Therapy" has become one of today's most effective cutting-edge methods of healing.

It is also a book for anyone who wants to experience the joy, wonder, self-awareness and peace of mind that comes from creating an interspecies horse/human relationship. And finally it puts forth and clarifies the principles of today's Natural Horsemanship.

Horses do not judge other horses or humans. Horses only judge their behavior. If a person is not exhibiting predatory behavior a horse will become curious and usually begin to approach and interact with them. He accepts the human as he or she is. The horse does not see a war veteran who may have seen and done horrific things, he sees another being. The horse does not see a child with autism, he sees a child.

Establishing a relationship with a horse can often be the first time any of these men, women or children feel love and acceptance for their true selves. It is this amazing power of horses to heal and teach us about ourselves that is accessible to anyone and found in the pages of *Riding Home – The Power of Horses to Heal*.

Robert Redford's Foreword to *Riding Home ~ The Power of Horses to Heal*

"Horses have been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. My first time on a real horse was when I was five or six. Granted, it was only in the pony ride ring, but it was instant love. This big-hearted animal, moving me along, like it was the most natural thing in the world. But that's the thing about horses. They connect in ways that often, words can't capture but hearts can. It's powerfully emotional for both human and horse.

Up through my early teens, my relationship to horses was always on horseback, and along with my friends during those days it all had a decidedly show-off, wild quality to it. It wasn't until I found myself in Estes Park, Colorado at 15, spending days grooming and caring for horses to earn my keep, that I developed a true connection that went far beyond riding horseback.

This simple emotional connection is at the heart of Tim Hayes' stories, which is ironic, as most people he features are considered to have very complicated challenges. I've always been drawn to the truth and simplicity inherent in nature. And that's why I believe Tim Hayes is really on to something here.

Therapy. Equine therapy. The power of nature—horses—and its connection to the human spirit are front and center, at every turn of the page in this important book. And it is personified in the experiences of everyone from autistic children and brave veterans coming home with everything from PTSD to paralysis and loss of limbs—to prisoner inmates and troubled teens who've endured way too much in their young lives.

In most cases, nothing else had cracked the code of their suffering, or their myriad of challenges. And somehow, the majestic horse entered the picture, sometimes by chance, sometimes as a last resort, and suddenly there was hope for the first time in as long as anyone could remember. I think this is what drew me to my 1998 film, *The Horse Whisperer*, along with a portrayal of ranch life out West that was fast disappearing. At the heart of the story is a man and a horse, and healing for not only himself, but for those around him.

There's something meditative about communicating with horses, something instinctive where you eventually have to merge into one in order to move forward together. I think maybe that simple notion is why we are seeing such widespread success in the horse's ability to break through where nothing else has worked, and we're just left with a form of healing.

The lessons you'll take away from this beautiful volume of healing and love between man and nature will stay with you for a long time. And who knows, maybe it will open a door to healing for you or someone you love." Robert Redford © 2015

This article is adapted from my new book *Riding Home - The Power of Horses to Heal*. To learn more about the book please visit: www.ridinghome.com Every book ordered will benefit children of families in need, veterans with PTSD and children with autism.

I will be available to meet you and sign books in East Hampton, New York on August 8, 2015 at Authors Night authorsnight.org and August 29, 2015 at BookHampton bookhampton.com/new-events.

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